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PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHLP #2167 2232059
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 112059Z AUG 06
FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0210
INFO RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION 6044
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 3361
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 7211
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 4476
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 1749
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA 1768
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO 3961
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 4380
RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO 8947
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DC
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHINGTON DC
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC

UNCLAS LA PAZ 002167

SIPDIS

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STATE FOR WHA/AND
TREASURY FOR SGOOCH
ENERGY FOR CDAY AND SLADISLAW

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [ASEC](#) [ELAB](#) [PGOV](#) [BL](#)
SUBJECT: POLICE THREATEN HUNGER STRIKE

¶1. (SBU) The National Association of Police, a union of lower-level officials in the national police force, declared a state of emergency on August 10, threatening a mass hunger strike if the GOB did not agree to increase police salaries. No violence has occurred. During the first week of August, the GOB granted the Bolivian military an 8 percent pay raise, while offering the police force only 3 percent, according to police contacts. Police unions from six departments -- Cochabamba, Santa Cruz, Tarija, Chuquisaca, Potosi, and La Paz -- are meeting currently (afternoon of August 11) with the Commander in Chief of the police force, who is representing "the GOB side", to seek agreement.

¶2. (SBU) The police have already implemented hunger strikes in La Paz, Cochabamba, and Santa Cruz. If agreement cannot be reached, the police are threatening a country-wide hunger strike. Police contacts told post that they do not anticipate any blockades or violent actions. The Minister of Government warned that police who violate the law or protest will be subject to the National Police Law and its regulations. She added that the government would not negotiate with the police under pressure, while Vice President Garcia Linera reportedly stated that a further pay raise would not be possible this year.

¶3. (SBU) Comment: Police strikes in the past have led to considerable civil upheaval in Bolivia. While this situation currently remains in its initial phases, it has the possibility to escalate. We will continue to monitor this situation closely. End comment.
GREENLEE